



P.O. Box 2438, Augusta, Maine 04338
Telephone: 207/626-8115
Fax: 207/626-9015
E-Mail: christy@maineindoorair.org
Web: www.maineindoorair.org

Maine Indoor Air Quality Council Testimony in Support of LD 280: An Act to Make Schools Safer & Healthier by Increasing the Maximum Debt Service Limit.

The Maine Indoor Air Quality Council (“MIAQC” or the “Council”) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to creating healthy, productive and environmentally sustainable indoor environments in Maine. Our efforts focus on the development of education, communications, and advocacy for safe and healthy indoor environments where Maine citizens live, work, play and learn.

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

If nothing else, the COVID-19 global pandemic has raised awareness of indoor air quality. We now understand there are things in the air we can’t see, smell or taste, yet they can still make us sick. And we know that the primary tool in the building management toolbox to reduce the risk of exposure to airborne pollutants is mechanical ventilation. There are many studies that clearly show how improved ventilation not only reduces the risk of exposure to airborne pollutants, it also improves student and staff productivity and performance and reduces absenteeism for all.

Maine has a large number of schools that were constructed before the development of minimum acceptable ventilation standards, and we know there are a large number of Maine schools that have no mechanical ventilation systems at all. For this reason, the Council supports any and all efforts to improve school environments through both the construction of new facilities as well as retrofitting existing facilities for mechanical ventilation and other indoor environment improvements. Raising the debt service limit to facilitate funding of construction projects is a great first step.

The Maine Indoor Air Quality Council can be available for the work session to answer any questions or provide further comment.

Respectfully submitted by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Christine G. Crocker'.

Christine G. Crocker, Executive Director
Maine Indoor Air Quality Council
Telephone: 207-626-8115; E-mail: christy@maineindoorair.org
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